

From: Dark Mage
To: Microsoft ATR
Date: 1/24/02 11:04pm
Subject: Comment on U.S. v. Microsoft

To quote John Stuart Mill, "The only freedom which deserves the name is that of pursuing our own good, in our own way, so long as we do not attempt to deprive others of theirs, or impede their efforts to obtain it."

I am a conservative, but unlike many of the famous conservatives out there, I fully believe that the only proper settlement in this case is to break up Microsoft. For I am also a network administrator in a mixed Novell/Linux/Windows2k environment and have to face the hardships of this monopoly everyday. When I see Novell struggling to keep their head above water when their network operating system is far superior to that of Microsoft. But they are losing ground anyway, partially because of Microsoft's amazing marketing machine, but mostly because of Microsoft using strengths in other areas to push their operating system. The Exchange/Outlook combination for mail and calendar delivery has a very slick interface that users like. It has tons of functionality bugs, and many security holes, but it's pretty, and users (and CEOs) demand to run it. And that's fine. That's market pressure. Unfortunately, you must run Windows as a desktop OS, and Windows as a server OS, in order to do it. Same with MS SQL Server 7. A fine product on its own, except that it is not as scalable as Oracle, BECAUSE it has to run on Windows NT, which isn't as scalable as the Unices and NetWare that Oracle runs on. So people buy more NT and 2000 servers to run it.

And this is the problem. They have a very weak operating system that can't compete on its own, so they use their influence in other markets to gain monopolistic market share that they otherwise couldn't get.

The only solution to this is to split them in two. The applications and the operating systems. The result of this would be products such as MS SQL Server for Solaris. MS Office for Linux. And an operating system that would work out its bugs and fix its security holes to survive rather than relying on the crutch of the applications to stay number one.

It is my personal opinion that this is Mr. Gates' ego at work. Windows is his pet project. It's how he got his name. And he knows that Windows would struggle in such an environment, so he resists a split being ordered. Never mind that the application division would grow by leaps and bounds, released from the shackles of only developing for Windows. Never mind that true competition would return to the marketplace the likes of which haven't been seen since Microsoft sabotaged Apple in the first place by stealing their Macintosh interface from them (although they stole it from Xerox, they asked Xerox nicely first). His baby, Windows, would be hurt in the short term, and he can't let that happen. Unfortunately, this course of action will hurt everyone else in the long term, and that is what the Department of

Justice originally set out to do. Hopefully they'll find the stomach to return to this course of action and do what's right, not what they think is the most politically popular because of a change in the White House staffing.

Sincerely,

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